

soon, and recovery was compromised as a result. She also understands that emergency economic relief, like unemployment compensation, needs to last as long as the emergency. It cannot be tied to arbitrary expiration dates, where potential political agendas come before human needs. There is a reason why the Finance Committee approved her nomination unanimously on Friday morning. I touched on some of those factors, and I am going to amplify a little bit.

For example, nobody deserves more credit than Chair Yellen for the longest economic expansion in American history. It lasted until the pandemic hit. As Federal Reserve Chair, she led an important change to the status quo in economic policy. Previously, there had been too great a focus on inflation and deficit. Chair Yellen said: Let's zero in more on unemployment, income, and inequality, and she believed that the economy could run a bit hotter. The record shows that the Yellen approach was right on. Unemployment went down, wages went up, and a lot of people were better off than they were before. That is exactly the kind of thinking America needs again because confronting the COVID economy is hammering working families, in particular. Again, another clear reason why Janet Yellen is the right pick to be the next Treasury Secretary.

The most recent economic data shows that 1.4 million people nationwide had filed new claims for unemployment benefits in the last full week of the previous administration. So it is not hard to figure out what that means. It is an economic catastrophe. It is more than twice the highest figure from any single week in the great recession. That means 1.4 million people—so, so many working families—are suddenly walking on an economic tightrope every single day, balancing the food cost against the fuel cost, the fuel cost against the rent bill, worried about finding a new job, getting a badly needed shift at work, falling behind on rent or the mortgage, feeding their kids, paying the electric bill, paying medical bills—worried that the economy is headed in reverse and worried about whether the Congress will be gridlocked.

The country lost 140,000 jobs last month. My home State lost more than 25,000, in part because the Senate, in something that just defied common sense, waited around for the recovery to peter out before passing any more relief. Thousands and thousands of neighborhood restaurants and bars and mom-and-pop businesses have been shuttered. Nearly 11 million workers are out of a job. Another 4 million Americans have fallen out of the labor force entirely since this time last year. Unless the Congress acts boldly and quickly with more relief, the damage from the COVID economic crash will long outlast the pandemic itself. That must not be allowed to happen.

The key, of course, is for the Senate to get down to work, and one of the

best ways you can do it is to confirm someone who is eminently qualified, Chair Janet Yellen, to be Treasury Secretary.

As I touched on, we are looking at working with her on a host of key economic issues. As I have said as the new chair of the Finance Committee, my first priority will be to make sure that this Congress does not commit again the mistake of 2009.

In 2009, the sense was, well, maybe we are getting there on economic recovery. We will be able to come back later if maybe we didn't do enough. Well, we all know that a missed opportunity is a missed opportunity, and, in 2009, the Congress said, All right. We can take our foot off the gas now. It was too early, and there wasn't any next effort to make up for the damage. I am committed to making sure that doesn't happen again. Suffice it to say, it took 7½ years for the unemployment rate in Oregon to return to its prerecession levels.

This time around, the Congress has been warned. The warning I am giving about making sure that Congress doesn't take its foot off the economic relief pedal too soon is not the first warning. Chair Powell, for example, made it clear that the biggest danger lies in not doing enough.

Increasing relief checks to \$2,000 is key. The Congress needs to increase and extend unemployment benefits for the entirety of the COVID crisis, and you do that by, in effect, tying the benefits to the real world, to economic conditions on the ground. That has been my proposal for some time. Other colleagues have long advanced similar ideas. It is not a revolutionary proposition to say that emergency relief should last as long as the emergency. Simply stated. And it should not be held hostage by the arbitrary political agendas of Members of Congress.

If you don't do it, dysfunction and gridlock in Congress creates still more havoc for people who have done nothing wrong and just need help. A decade ago, that help went away too quickly because benefits expired arbitrarily, and Congress did not keep up with extensions. The Congress needs to do better, and I believe that should include important upgrades as well to unemployment insurance, which was created in the last century. I don't think it is too much to say we at least bring this critical safety net program into the relevant century.

Now, sometimes these programs look a little rusty in the modern economy. Sometimes it is because of outright sabotage. But workers suffer, particularly Black and Hispanic workers. So there are steps that need to be taken, in addition to modernizing the benefits, increasing base benefits, bringing all workers into the system, and ensuring it can hold up in a crisis.

Finally, Chair Yellen had some important comments on fixing America's broken Tax Code. I will tell you, Madam President, I start with the

proposition that a nurse who is treating COVID patients and paying taxes with every single paycheck should not find themselves in a disadvantaged position when compared to billionaires who, in effect, do no such thing and can postpone and postpone and postpone paying their taxes.

Now, there is a lot of work we need to do to repair the 2017 bill. The previous administration actually increased the incentives for corporations to ship jobs overseas. I want to fix that mistake. I want to work with Secretary Yellen on energy policy because so much of it deals with the Tax Code.

Suffice it to say, those are just some of the challenges Chair Yellen will face when, I believe, she is confirmed tonight as Treasury Secretary. She is supremely qualified—a member, in my view, of the Senate Confirmation hall of fame—and a proven economic policymaker.

Finally, I say to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, it is long past time to have a woman lead the U.S. Treasury Department. Chair Yellen has my full support.

As colleagues come for this vote—and it is a significant economic policy vote, make no mistake about that—I would just ask my colleagues to reflect on the fact that Chair Yellen was approved by the Finance Committee 26 to nothing. Sometimes I say about this place—I have questions about whether you can get a simple decision like ordering a sandwich decided on a 26-to-nothing. She was approved unanimously because she gives public service a good name.

I urge my colleagues to support Janet Yellen for Secretary of the Treasury when we vote in just a few minutes.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

TRIBUTE TO RYAN D. MCCARTHY

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I want to visit this evening on the Senate floor and take this opportunity to recognize a public servant, a leader, our former Secretary of the Army, the Honorable Ryan D. McCarthy. Secretary McCarthy led our Nation's Army from September 30, 2019, to January 20, 2021, and during that time, he made it a more modern, agile, and lethal fighting force.

We have worked together on a number of projects for Kansans and those who serve or have served our Nation during his tenure as Secretary, Acting Secretary, and Under Secretary of the Army, and I have grown to consider him a good, solid friend.

One of my most memorable experiences in the Senate was visiting the 1st Infantry Division soldiers in Germany and Poland—soldiers who come from Fort Riley, KS—with the Secretary, followed by our trip to Afghanistan to meet with troops on the frontlines in the global War on Terror. Those visits marked the beginning of our friendship, and since then, I have appreciated his guidance and his support during his

visits to Kansas and our many discussions here in our Nation's Capital.

In 2019, Secretary McCarthy joined me in Kansas to visit Seitz Elementary School, which serves the families of the Big Red One soldiers on Fort Riley. Secretary McCarthy was instrumental in helping to find funding for this school in 2011 when he was the Special Assistant to Defense Secretary Robert Gates, a Kansan. I was pleased he joined me in Kansas to visit the school—and its students—that he helped create in 2019. We also met with Fort Riley leadership and then traveled to Wichita to visit defense manufacturing and academic leaders to discuss the future of Army procurement.

These personal touch points with soldiers and with the Army community were some of the reasons why Secretary McCarthy was universally respected within the Army family.

While I will always appreciate our personal engagements with soldiers, I will also remember our efforts to support soldiers and veterans when they step off the battlefield or separate from military service.

This past Veterans Day, we coauthored an editorial that discussed our parallel efforts to support the mental health and well-being of soldiers and veterans. Reports show Americans across the country are feeling isolated and alone in today's socially distanced environment, including our Nation's service men and women and veteran populations. Between my efforts as chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee to implement the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act and Secretary McCarthy's effort to build interpersonal connections between soldiers, we are working to give soldiers and veterans the tools they need to overcome mental health challenges they face.

As Secretary McCarthy transitions out of the watchful eye of public life, I rise this evening to express my appreciation for his leadership, his character, and his moral compass. He never let politics or convenience influence his decisions, and that has significantly benefited soldiers, Army civilians, veterans, and Kansans across the Nation.

As the chairman and now ranking member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I will always strive to help veterans find success after service.

Secretary McCarthy, I have no doubts that you will find success and happiness after your dedicated service to our country. I thank your family for their support of your public service. I know that you and your family will find a quality life with purpose and meaning as you enter the next phase.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to complete my remarks before the scheduled rollcall vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO CHRIS GILLOTT

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I rise today to recognize and thank three long-serving aides who have served my office but more importantly served our Nation proudly, and they are now moving on to the next chapters of their lives.

First, Chris Gillott. Chris Gillott was my legislative director and for 8 years has been my right-hand person on policy. He never failed to take the ideas we discussed together and craft the actual policy needed to make a meaningful difference in the lives of folks in Louisiana and the lives of all Americans.

He was a master at navigating the partisan divide to find areas of consensus upon which we could build to advance real solutions. I was always struck that he was on a first-name basis with the legislative director of—and fill in the Democratic Senator's or the Republican Senator's name. You have a sense that in the era before Zoom calls, they would go out and have a beer on a regular basis, and that helped us tremendously.

We saw this fully on display recently as Chris was a central figure in the so-called 908 Coalition, which jump-started stalled COVID relief packages. And it wasn't just the relationships between the Senators but, again, as I said, between the different legislative directors from both parties in all offices.

His efforts were also central to passing legislation to ban surprise medical billing—a more than 2-year effort that will have a direct and positive impact on the pocketbooks of American families. He was crucial in our effort to make healthcare more affordable and pass generational tax reform. For every major legislative pursuit, I could rely upon Chris.

What many in Louisiana may not know is that he has also been a central figure engaged in some of the most pressing issues affecting our State, including offshore energy production, revenue sharing, energy regulation and permitting, the National Flood Insurance Program, and public works related to flood protection. These are all important to the well-being of our State and the folks who live there, as well as our entire country, and all these were regularly under assault.

Chris was a fearless advocate for energy production and for the jobs that energy production creates to not only help meet America's energy needs but to meet the individual families' financial needs. He has been on the frontlines to prevent changes to revenue sharing that would gut the money used in my State for hurricane protection, flood mitigation, and coastal environmental renewal. He has defended the National Flood Insurance Program to ensure that this critical lifeline remains accessible to people across the country and, importantly, to those in Louisiana.

Thank you, Chris, for all you have done for me and for those of Louisiana.

TRIBUTE TO ALLISON KAPSNER SOLLEY

Madam President, the next person I will speak of is Allison Kapsner Solley. Allison is a Minnesotan. She said she grew up on the upper end of the Mississippi, but she found a home in the lower end of the Mississippi—or at least the office that represented Louisiana. She joined my staff at the beginning of my first Senate term as a scheduler but through sheer excellence became deputy chief of staff and a close confidant.

Trust is so important. I learned I could always trust Allie's judgment and her ability to accomplish anything. She is irreplaceable. She has had an impact on this office, ensuring that we better serve Louisiana, but that impact has meant that we will better serve Louisiana even after her departure.

Some examples. For any office to succeed, it needs to run efficiently and effectively. I knew this, that we had to have systems. Allie figured out the systems. She implemented them across all the offices here in DC and Louisiana. She kept things running smoothly. And she has a skill of identifying an individual's strengths and helping that individual leverage those strengths into results that contributed to the whole but also to the future of the individual.

I am about to say this about Allie, but I could say it of Chris and also of David, whom I am about to speak of. In Mark chapter 10, versus 42 through 45, Jesus speaks about servant leadership, and in there is a quote that “the greatest among you shall be your servants.” Allie is someone who has served others and helped others serve as well. Whether it be our staff, our mission, our constituents, the State of Louisiana, or the United States of America, she served creatively and tirelessly. She will be greatly missed, but I am looking forward to all that she achieves as she enters the next phase of her career.

TRIBUTE TO DAVID MILLS

Madam President, now let me speak of David Mills, a Louisiana native and a man of tremendous character and deep faith who has served for 5 years on my staff. He came to Washington because he felt called to give back to his State and Nation through public service. He was working in Congress for the right reasons, and his work reflected that.

David handled pro-life issues and other legal issues for my office. He was key in last year's impeachment trial as an attorney providing quick, reliable research to supplement my understanding of the testimony that we heard.

David also has the ability just to note something others don't notice and then very gently suggest some modification of how I would handle a situation, and that modification, although nuanced, could be so important, and I really learned to trust those insights.

David also handled privacy issues and has laid the foundation for work that